



CONNECTICUT STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

March 18, 2015

Senator Terry Gerratana, Co-Chair Public Health Committee
Representative Matthew Ritter, Co-Chair Public Health Committee
Senator Joe Markley, Ranking Member Public Health Committee
Representative Prasad Srinivasan, Ranking Member Public Health Committee

Members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Ted Schroll, Legislative Representative for the Connecticut State Firefighters Association. Our Association represents more than 26,000 paid and volunteer firefighters in Connecticut. We appreciate your allowing us to comment on the following legislation.

Raised Senate Bill #999, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.

We have some very serious concerns with Section 1 of this legislation. Our feeling is that if this bill is passed with the language as currently written, it could jeopardize the Incident Command system currently being used by Law Enforcement, the Fire Service, and Emergency Medical Services. There can be only one Incident Commander per emergency. The safety of an emergency incident scene is paramount not only for the victims of that emergency, but also for the emergency responders as well. The Incident Commander is the one person responsible for the safety of all those involved.

It has been stated that the reason for this legislation is that it has been reported that there have been occasions when EMS personnel have been delayed from being allowed access to a patient/victim. While that is possible, one must also observe any extenuating circumstances; a motor vehicle is lying on its side and must be stabilized; downed power lines that need to be secured; hazardous materials need to be mitigated; it is the Incident Commander's responsibility to secure these hazards before anyone is allowed to enter an incident scene. We once read a quote from an unknown individual; **"The emotional enactment of legislation in response to an isolated incident is not good policy."** We agree.

The Connecticut General Assembly wisely passed CGS 7-313e AUTHORITY OF A FIRE OFFICER many years ago recognizing the senior fire officer as the person designated, by statute, as the Incident Commander of an emergency scene. Do not diminish the authority of that individual.

DELETE SECTION 1 FROM RAISED SENATE BILL #999

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Public Health Committee.

Respectfully,

Ted Schroll Jr.

Ted Schroll Jr., Legislative Representative
Connecticut State Firefighters Association

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